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## California Postsecondary Education Commission

# The Granting of Doctoral Degrees in California: Policy Questions and Issues Pertaining to Senate Bill 724

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION ONLY

The granting of doctoral degrees by public Universities has historically been the exclusive responsibility of the University of California (UC) with the provision that CSU may award joint doctoral degrees with UC or Independent Institutions, as articulated in California's Master Plan for Higher Education. Senate Bill 724 (Scott) would authorize the California State University (CSU) to award doctoral degrees in selected applied professional fields. Not surprisingly, there has been considerable debate over whether this change represents a fundamental reordering of the educational missions of California's public four-year universities or the best response to the state and the nation's need for trained professionals in applied fields.

*The Commission advises the Governor and Legislature on higher education policy and fiscal issues. Its primary focus is to ensure that the state's educational resources are used effectively to provide Californians with postsecondary education opportunities. More information about the Commission is available at [www.cpec.ca.gov](http://www.cpec.ca.gov).*

## The legislation

Senate Bill 724 amends the section of the Education Code (66010.4) that defines the missions and functions of California's higher education segments. Specifically, it adds the following language to section 66010.4 (b):

*The California State University may award, in selected professional fields, the doctoral degree, but not the doctor of philosophy degree, except as authorized in subparagraph (B)\*, nor the doctoral degree in law, medicine, dentistry, or veterinary medicine.*

\*Subparagraph (B) refers to joint doctoral programs

The bill requires the CSU Board of Trustees to review and approve proposals for new doctoral programs taking into consideration the following criteria:

- The need for well-prepared professionals in the field;
- Professional standards, including accreditation and licensure requirements;
- The availability of systemwide and statewide resources; and
- The extent of systemwide and campus faculty expertise in the field.

Under current law UC is assigned "exclusive jurisdiction ...over instruction in the profession (s) of medicine, dentistry, and veterinary medicine," and "sole authority in public higher education to award the doctoral degree in all fields of learning, except that it may agree with the California State University to award joint doctoral degrees in selected fields," and to be "the primary state supported academic agency for research."

CSU has as its “primary function the provision of undergraduate instruction and graduate instruction through the master’s degree.” Faculty research is “authorized to the extent that it is consistent with the primary function of the California State University.

### **Perspectives of the segments**

Those in opposition to SB 724 include the University of California and the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities. UC contends that its current level of doctoral degree production in the fields cited by CSU (educational leadership, audiology and physical therapy), coupled with anticipated future joint degree production with the CSU and degree production of California’s independent colleges and universities, will meet most of the states workforce needs. In areas where some believe there are unmet needs, such as in the fields of Audiology and Physical Therapy, the University has stated that it is committed to expanding joint doctoral programs with the CSU. The University also argues that a joint approach makes the best use of limited state resources, and that the CSU proposal threatens the viability of new joint doctoral programs in educational leadership at a critical stage in their development. UC also argues that changing the Master Plan to give CSU independent doctorate authority could result in spreading resources for graduate education too thinly and thus result in diluting the quality of doctoral-level training in California.

For its part, CSU has concluded that there is a compelling workforce demand for applied doctorates that cannot be accommodated under current policy and law. They contend that the focus on basic research at the doctoral level by UC precludes the development of effective programs in applied fields. They also point to increased accreditation and licensure requirements that require a doctorate for practitioners in certain applied fields. CSU has also argued that the joint doctoral alternative has shown only limited success over time in meeting state needs and is cumbersome and bureaucratic in practice.

CSU points to five key drivers behind the proposed change;

- Recognition of the level of training now required in many professions;
- The need to ensure that high quality professionals are available to meet the needs of the state;
- The long-standing expertise and experience of CSU faculty in these fields;
- The need to respond to the changes in accreditation and licensure requirements in a timely manner; and
- Recognition of the cultural and mission-based focus and expertise of the University of California in basic research and Ph.D. programs.

The three applied fields that would be immediately impacted by the change are Educational Leadership, Audiology, and Physical Therapy. All three of these fields have existing joint doctoral programs between UC and CSU.

### **Cost issues**

CSU also believes that the doctoral programs could be established with no additional state funding for start up costs and could be supported by a cost structure that effectively mirrors the current support for joint doctoral programs. That is, doctoral students would be charged fees commensurate with the cost of delivering the programs. It is anticipated that such fees would still be lower than those charged at independent institutions and would be comparable to those paid by students enrolled in doctoral programs at the University of California.

UC disputes CSU's cost analysis, citing start up and planning costs of \$4.7 million for joint Ed.D. programs and the increased marginal cost rate at CSU driven by expanding graduate enrollments.

## **The role of the Commission**

Section 66904 of the Education Code requires that CPEC review proposals for all new postsecondary education programs.

For the purposes of this section, "new postsecondary educational programs" means all proposals for new schools or colleges, all series of courses arranged in a scope or sequence leading to (1) a graduate or undergraduate degree, or (2) a certificate of a type defined by the commission, which have not appeared in a segment's or district's academic plan within the previous two years, and all proposals for new research institutes or centers which have not appeared in a segment's or district's academic plan within the previous two years. It is further the intent of the Legislature that the advice of the commission be utilized in reaching decisions on requests for funding new and continuing graduate and professional programs, enrollment levels, and capital outlay for existing and new campuses, colleges, and off-campus centers.

Historically, the program review process has taken the form of reviewing segmental proposals based on the following criteria:

- Student Demand
- Societal Needs
- Appropriateness to the Institutional and System Mission
- Number of Existing and Proposed Programs in the Field
- Total Costs of the Program
- Maintenance and Improvement of Quality
- Advancement of Knowledge

## **Issues for Commission consideration**

- 1. Is the current structure of graduate education at California's public four-year universities adequate to meet workforce demand for doctoral level education in applied/professional fields?**
  - Should the production of graduate degrees be tied to manpower requirements?
  - Is the CSU rather than the UC best positioned to meet workforce demands?
  - Are current workforce demands for applied doctorates temporary and likely to change over time?
  - Is the CSU "uniquely capable of responding to state needs and exhibiting leadership in the development of graduate degree and certificate programs with a regional and applied focus"?
  - Has there been a market driven paradigm shift in graduate education which places a premium on acquiring a body of knowledge or a skill rather than a degree certification?

**2. What is the most efficient method for delivering doctoral level education?**

- Have joint doctoral programs been proven inadequate to meet the need for trained professionals in applied fields?
- Can/will the joint doctoral programs for Educational Leadership, Audiology and Physical Therapy now in place or being developed meet California's future workforce demands?
- What do the data say about the effectiveness of joint doctoral programs?
- Is there a demonstrated need beyond a few exceptional fields for doctoral programs in applied fields?

**3. Will program costs – both state funding requirements and student fee increases - impact the CSU's ability to deliver quality doctoral programs?**

- Will CSU have sufficient resources available for quality doctoral training including laboratory and library resources and low student-faculty ratios?
- Will the cost of graduate student internships and teaching assistantships impact program costs?

**4. Can the "applied doctorate" be sufficiently differentiated from other doctoral degrees to prevent the eventual erosion of UC's responsibility for education at the doctoral level?**

- According to the CSU Academic Senate "task force" report "... an applied doctorate prepares graduates for careers (that) emphasize content-dependent research rather than open-ended research. Most masters programs at CSU are centered on applied and professional areas therefore proposed doctoral programs would reflect the experience and expertise at the CSU."
- Will the competition for limited state resources adversely impact UC's ability to provide doctoral level education with a research rather than applied focus?
- Does the different focus of graduate education at UC and CSU argue for more authority to grant doctoral degrees in applied fields at CSU?

**5. Issues that should be addressed before legislation moves forward include:**

- CSU contends that the need for publicly supported doctoral programs in one or more selected fields is well established and that CPEC can determine specific programmatic needs within the normal course of the program approval process. Is this the case?
- Is the independent doctorate at CSU such a fundamental departure from the state's Master Plan for Higher Education that it deserves more careful scrutiny that can be given in the legislative process?
- Is the CPEC study regarding the need for an independent Ed.D. at CSU a good model for assessing need prior to reviewing specific program proposals?

**SB 724 – SOURCE DOCUMENTS**

**DATE**

04/29/05	Position Letter (Oppose) from UC to Senate Appropriations Committee Chair, Senator Carole Migden
04/22/05	Report: “Cost Issues Related to Independent Professional / Clinical Doctorates in the CSU”
04/13/05	Bill Analysis: Senate Committee on Education, Jack Scott, Chair
04/13/05	Testimony Senate Education Committee Hearing: UC opposition to SB 724 (Scott) CSU: doctoral degrees. A. Eugene Washington, MD, Executive Vice Chancellor, Professor, Gynecology, Epidemiology and Health Policy UC San Francisco
04/13/05	Testimony Senate Education Committee Hearing: UC opposition to SB 724 (Scott) CSU: doctoral degrees. Dr. M. R. C. Greenwood, Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, UC
3/24/05	Letter from Robert C. Dynes, President, UC regarding CSU and UC agreement to establish new joint Doctorates in Education. Letter addressed to California legislature: Chair, The Honorable Jack Scott, Senate Education Committee, Chair, the Honorable Carol Liu, Assembly Higher Education Committee, and Chair, the Honorable Jackie Goldberg, Assembly Education Committee
02/02/05	Report: CSU, “Legislative Proposal Authority to Grant Professional / Clinical Doctorates”
09/04	Report: Academic Senate of CSU – Task Force on Graduate & Postbaccalaureate Ed. in the CSU, “Rethinking Graduate Education in the CSU: Meeting the Needs of the People of California for Graduate Education for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century
04/04	CSHE Research & Occasional Paper Series, UC Berkeley – Thomas J. La Belle, Exec. Director, International & Area Studies “Credential Inflation and the Professional Doctorate in California Higher Education”
1986, 1985	Issue Papers The Master Plan Renewed – Commission for the Review of the Master Plan for Higher Ed., “Unity, Equity, Quality, and Efficiency in California Postsecondary Education”
Commission Report 92-3	California’s Joint Doctoral Programs, A Report on Doctoral Programs Offered by Campuses of the CSU with Campuses of the UC and the Claremont Graduate School